

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-5 (canceled).

6. (currently amended): An apparatus for handling ~~blanks~~coupons in the production of ~~(cigarette)~~ packs with at least one blank coupon applied to ~~the each~~ pack, ~~in particular at the~~ coupon (11) ~~which has~~having been folded a number of times, ~~it being possible for this blank~~ ~~or wherein the~~ coupon to ~~be~~is removed from a container, ~~in particular a magazine (20), in the a~~ region of a ~~packaging machine—packer (13)—~~packer (13) and fed to the pack, characterized by the following features:

a) the ~~blanks or~~ coupons (11) ~~can be~~are produced by a coupon-production means (16) in ~~the a~~ region of a separate coupon arrangement ~~assembly~~ (15),

b) the coupon-production means (16) is followed by a distributor system (17) for feeding the coupons (11) one after the other to a filling station (18),

c) ~~containers, namely~~ upright magazines (20); are kept in ~~the a~~ region of the filling station (18), ~~it being possible for~~wherein the coupons (11) ~~to be~~are conveyed one after the other into the magazines (20), which are open at the top, by a filling conveyor (61), and wherein a coupon stack (19) ~~being is~~is formed within ~~the each~~ magazine (20), and

d) the magazines (20) filled with coupons (11) ~~can be~~are set down ~~on a conveyor, in~~ particular on a transporting cart (42, 43) for transporting a selected number of magazines (20) to the packer (13).

7. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that a ~~(separate)~~separate coupon arrangement ~~assembly~~ (15) comprises a coupon-production means (16), a following distributor system (17) and a subsequent filling station (18), ~~it being possible for wherein~~ a plurality of, ~~in particular four~~, coupons (11) ~~to beare~~ produced simultaneously in ~~the a~~ region of the coupon-production means (16) and ~~to beare~~ fed separately and one after the other to the filling station or the filling conveyor (61) by the distributor system (17).

8. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that the distributor system comprises a plurality of successive endless ~~conveyors, namely~~ receiving belts (28, 29, 30, 31), by means of which, as a result of different conveying speeds, ~~it is possible to produce~~ a spacing is produced between the simultaneously produced coupons (11), intermediate conveyors (32, 33) and connection conveyors (34, 35), and a collecting conveyor (36) by means of which the coupons (11) which are fed in a plurality of paths ~~can beare~~ brought together into a common path for transfer to an entry conveyor (37).

9. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that the coupons arriving one after the other, ~~in particular in the a~~ region of the entry conveyor (37) to the filling station (18), ~~can beare~~ distributed over at least two transfer conveyors (39, 40), which are each assigned to one of ~~a number of, in particular two~~, two filling subassemblies (26, 27).

10. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that, in ~~the a~~ region of the filling station (18), the upright magazines (20) ~~can beare~~ transported one after the other, by a magazine conveyor (55), into a filling location (59) ~~in the region of, namely beneath, beneath~~ the filling conveyor (61), and in that the filled magazines (20) ~~can beare~~ conveyed by the magazine conveyor (55) into a subsequent closure station (66) for the purpose

of applying a closure to an upwardly oriented open side of the magazine (20), ~~in particular~~ for the purpose of applying a transversely directed closure ~~strip or~~ tape (67).

11. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that ~~closure means, in particular~~ the tape (67), ~~can be~~ is applied to the top side of the magazine in the a region of the closure station (66) by a tape subassembly (68), ~~it being possible for~~ wherein the magazine (20) ~~to be~~ is conveyed relative to the tape subassembly (68) by the magazine conveyor (55) in order for the tape (67) to be applied.

12. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that, in ~~the~~ a region of the tape subassembly (68), the tape (67) ~~can be~~ is pressed onto side walls and onto the top side of the magazine (20) by a spring-biased press-on roller (80), ~~it being possible for~~ wherein the press-on roller (80), which ~~can be moved~~ is movable counter to pressure, ~~to be~~ is moved by the transported magazine (20) out of a press-on position for the tape on a side wall and over the top side of the tape while guiding the tape (67) in the process.

13. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 12, characterized in that tapes (67) are arranged on a continuous carrier band (78), and in that the spring-biased press-on roller (80) butts against the carrier band (78), ~~to be precise on the~~ a side thereof which is directed away from the ~~tape~~ tapes (67).

14. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that the tape (67) is folded in a U-shaped manner around a top side of the magazine (20), ~~namely~~ with a leg (73) on one side and an endpiece (74) on the opposite side, two press-on elements causing the tape (67) to be transferred from the carrier band (78) to the magazine, ~~namely~~ said elements comprising the press-on roller (80), on the one hand, and a separately moveable pressure-exerting roller (84), on the other hand.

15. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that arranged in ~~the~~ a region of the filling station (18), ~~in particular~~ following the closure station (66) for applying the tape (67), is a printing unit (89) for applying production-related data or codes to the ~~magazine (20), in particular to the~~ tape (67).

16. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that the magazines (20) filled in ~~the~~ a region of the filling station (18) ~~can be~~ are removed from the filling station (18) and set down, on a conveyor, ~~in particular on the~~ bearing plate (45) of a transporting cart (42, 43), by a transfer conveyor, ~~in particular by a~~ gantry-type conveyor (47), the gantry-type conveyor (47) preferably comprising two longitudinal members (48, 49), a transverse member (50), which ~~can be moved~~ is movable along the longitudinal members (48, 49), and a carrying arm (51) which ~~can be moved~~ is movable up and down on the transverse member (50) and has a holder (53) for magazines (20).

17. (currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that the ~~coupon arrangement (15), in particular~~ coupon-production means (16), and/or a printer (89) and/or ~~a~~ the packer (13) and/or a reader (90) for markings on the magazines (20) are connected to a control unit (91) for controlling the coupon production in dependence on requirements in ~~the~~ a region of the packer (13) and for corresponding coding of the magazines (20) and/or of the transporting ~~earts~~ cart (42, 43).